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11/22/23

A Cancer Vaccine? Scientists Are Working on It + More

The Defender's Big Pharma Watch delivers the latest headlines related to pharmaceutical companies and their products, including vaccines, drugs, and medical devices and treatments. The views expressed in the below excerpts from other news sources do not necessarily reflect the views of The Defender. Our goal is to provide readers with breaking news that affects human health and the environment.

By The Defender Staff

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A Cancer Vaccine? Scientists Are Working on It

Newsweek reported:

> As cancer researchers expand the frontiers of their understanding of the basic science of cancer, biotech companies are using what they've already learned to mobilize the human immune system against cancer.
>
> In 2017, Moderna, in partnership with pharmaceutical giant Merck, announced plans to start human trials with a personalized vaccine that targets solid tumors. To make a specific vaccine for each patient, they start by sequencing the DNA of the patient's healthy cells and cancerous ones. By comparing the two, they identify hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of mutations in the cancer cells.
>
> Then they use AI to choose 34 mutations in each patient most likely to elicit a strong response from the immune system. To train the algorithms, the

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companies have partnered with university medical centers to gain access to biopsy samples.

Genentech, a San Francisco–based biotech company, is also developing a vaccine designed to attack individual tumors. It has partnered with BioNTech, which like Moderna also gained global recognition for its role in creating mRNA vaccines during the pandemic.

Monsanto Hit With $165 Million Verdict Over PCBs in Seattle School

Reuters reported:

A U.S. jury has ordered Bayer's Monsanto to pay $165 million to employees of a school northeast of Seattle who claimed chemicals made by the company called polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, leaked from light fixtures and got them sick.

The Washington state court jury found the company liable for selling products containing PCBs used in the Sky Valley Education Center in Monroe, Washington, that were not safe and did not include adequate warnings. The award included nearly $50 million in compensatory damages and $115 million in punitive damages.

The verdict in favor of six teachers and a custodian who said exposure to the PCBs gave them cancer, brain injuries and other issues marks the latest trial loss for the company, which is now facing nearly $870 million in verdicts from alleged PCB exposure at the Sky Valley center, said an attorney for the plaintiffs.

The company is appealing those verdicts. Monsanto said in a statement that it will contest Monday's verdict and that blood, air and other tests show the school employees were not exposed to unsafe levels of PCBs.

AstraZeneca Fights Accusations Its COVID Jab Was 'Defective'

Financial Times reported:

AstraZeneca is contesting accusations that its COVID-19 jab was "defective" after the drugmaker was sued for damages by a vaccine recipient who claimed to have suffered from a severe side effect. The Anglo-Swedish drugmaker, which developed the vaccine with the University of Oxford, has filed its defense in a case brought by Jamie Scott, who claimed he suffered a rare but severe type of blood clot because he took the vaccine.

The lawsuit will be closely watched, in case other vaccine recipients could file more suits. If found liable, any damages would be covered by a U.K. government vaccine damage payment scheme.

Concerns about the rare but serious blood clotting side effect emerged as the vaccine was rolled out in early 2021. AstraZeneca updated the label to warn recipients of the concern on April 7 and April 15. Scott received the vaccine on April 23 after the warnings. Then, 10 days after his vaccination, he suffered from a headache, vomiting and impaired speech.

The company pointed out that because Scott was aged 44 at the time of receiving the vaccine, he was in the age category where the vaccine continued to be recommended in the U.K., even after updated guidance advised the under-30s, and people between 30 and 39 who were not at high risk of COVID-19, to take other vaccines if possible.

Nursing Home Vaccination Rates Are Low as COVID Cases Rise

Axios reported:

Only about 17% of nursing home residents and 2% of staff are up to date on their COVID-19 shots as cases rise across the country and health

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officials prepare for another seasonal tripledemic of respiratory diseases.

The big picture: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention figures show takeup of the updated vaccine is lagging in the high-risk setting and could reflect the troubled rollout of updated shots that slowed distribution to long-term care facilities.

By the numbers: Arizona's nursing homes had the lowest rate of residents who were up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations at 6.2%. Meanwhile, South Dakota had the highest rate at 47%, followed by North Dakota at 43%.

The 2024 Outlook for Global Pharma Calls for More Difficult Days Ahead

Forbes reported:

Seismic shifts within the healthcare market have pushed the pharmaceutical industry toward some painful transitions in recent years. It's evident the traditional commercial model has been upended permanently. Next year, expect economic pressures, sweeping industry-wide changes in competition and market expectations as well as tightening of the global regulatory environment, to intensify.

Addressing these challenges requires an urgent pivot to a new market-driven model–but as history continues to remind us, that is much easier said than done. Our recently released Numerof & Associates 2024 Global Pharma Outlook highlights some of the key areas where pharma companies will continue to face great challenges as they fundamentally rethink old assumptions about their current business model.

Sen. Bernie Sanders Publicly Pressures Merck, J&J, and Bristol Myers Squibb to Testify on Drug Pricing

STAT News reported:

Senate Democrats, led by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), on Tuesday mounted a public pressure campaign to get the executives of Merck, Johnson & Johnson, and Bristol Myers Squibb to testify in a January hearing on why the United States pays more for prescription drugs than other countries.

All three companies have sued the Biden administration over the new Medicare drug price negotiation that congressional Democrats passed last year. Bristol Myers Squibb's blood thinner Eliquis; Johnson & Johnson's blood thinner Xarelto, anti-inflammatory medicine Stelara, and blood cancer treatment Imbruvica; and Merck's diabetes drug Januvia were selected as part of the first 10 drugs to go through the negotiation process.

4 out of 5 Mexicans Who Got a Flu Shot This Year Turned Down Cuban and Russian COVID Vaccines

Associated Press reported:

Four out of five people in Mexico who got influenza shots so far this year turned down the government's recommendation that they get Russian or Cuban COVID-19 boosters at the same time, officials said Tuesday. Assistant Health Secretary Ruy López Ridaura attributed the high refusal rate to people being reluctant to get two vaccines at the same time.

But the population eligible for flu and COVID-19 shots — people over 60 and people with underlying health problems — are considered high-risk, and Mexicans in those groups had extremely high take-up rates for COVID vaccines in 2021 and 2022, according to the Health Department.

"It is an old antigen, it's as if they were going to give me an influenza vaccine from 2020," said Andreu Comas, a professor of medicine at the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosi. "There are no studies regarding the effectiveness of both of these vaccines against the (current) variants."

Meanwhile, Mexico has held up approval for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 boosters, both of which were designed to work against the COVID variants currently circulating. While those shots have been approved for use in the United States since September, they may not be available for Mexicans until 2024.

Cameroon Receives First Shipment of GSK's Mosquirix Malaria Vaccine

Reuters reported:

> Cameroon received its first shipment of Mosquirix malaria vaccines manufactured by British drugmaker GSK Plc late on Tuesday, as the nation struggles with the mosquito-borne disease that kills more than 600,000 each year globally.
>
> A batch of 331,200 doses of the vaccine — also known as RTS, S — was offloaded at Yaounde's Nsimalen International Airport, making Cameroon the first African country to receive the vaccine after the pilot programs in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi.
>
> GSK says more than 1.7 million children in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi have already received at least one dose of the shot, and that it will be rolled out in another nine malaria-endemic countries, of which Cameroon is one, from early next year.

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1 • Share Best Newest Oldest

Rob DF

9 days ago

"A Cancer Vaccine? Scientists Are Working on It". Can hardly wait! Then I won't have to worry about eating GMO food bathed in glyphosate!

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Ivanidea
9 days ago

More safe and effective nonsense heading our way.

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Chase Sheridan
9 days ago

This doesn't make a whole lot of sense since the current safe and effective treatment seems to be accelerating turbo cancer and helping pHARMa bring in billions in ineffective expensive care.

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tracychess
9 days ago

What next? A vaccine for malnutrition? They could identify the genetic problems that arise in cells damaged by malnutrition and train the immune system to attack and kill those cells? Seriously - it makes about as much sense.

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TruthHunter
9 days ago

How about healthy - no pesticides - food, and supplements for a healthy immune system? Cancer is not a seasonal flu, it is acquired by poor diet, mostly sugar overload of everything we eat, manufactured food additives, e.g. food coloring, Monsanto poison / fertilizers / too much weed killers, etc. God does not give people cancer - big pharmaceutical companies dumping drugs into waterways, and big corporations, with poisoned drinking water from factories. Clean up your act and stop the murder of cancer through common sense actions. We don't need more killer vaccines.!

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Jennifo → TruthHunter
8 days ago

SOOO few people correlate cancer with sugar & parasites. I get into this discussion frequently with my family. There IS a cure, 'they' don't want you knowing how to heal yourself without nuking your entire system.

No one thinks food has anything to do with disease because they've bought the lie that 'it's just genetic' to take a pill instead of doing the work of cleaning up their diet, environment, stress & mental loads.

It's all so dang infuriating, I'm growing quite uncompassionate to those who can't open their minds to other possibilities for good health..

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